

I am making this public statement today, my first as the former superintendent of the Chicago Police Department. I am of course disappointed that I could not finish my career on January 1, as originally planned. However, I respect yesterday's decision of Mayor Lori Lightfoot. Any police superintendent serves at the discretion of the mayor; that's how it is and that's how it should be.

When I announced my retirement last month, I stated proudly and accurately that I was leaving the Chicago Police Department with my integrity intact. That is still true today. If some want to question that belief, that is their right; but I know in my heart that I have always tried to act in a way that is in the best interests of this great city. One thing I want everyone to know is this: I did not intentionally mislead or deceive the Mayor or the people of Chicago. I acknowledge that I made a poor decision and had a lapse of judgment on the night of October 16. That was a mistake and I know that. However, I have no interest in fighting a battle for my reputation with those that want to question it now. Reputations are not built in a day and not damaged in a day either. They are the result of years of living. We reap what we sow in this world. I will simply rely on the reputation for integrity that I think I have earned during my long career, with the faith that we should all be judged by the entirety of our lives and not on what happened on our worst days.

Serving as the superintendent of the greatest police department in America has been the honor of my lifetime and an experience I never thought I would have. It still amazes me that a kid from Cabrini Green could make it this far. I was appointed at a tumultuous and difficult time for the Department. I never sought this job but I accepted it because I believed I could make a difference. I have never claimed to be perfect, but I have always given my all for the CPD and the people of Chicago. Violent crime is now falling in the city. We have begun the complicated process of implementing a far-reaching federal consent decree that is changing how the Department is managed. And at every step I have tried to remember that the CPD works best when it partners with the community, rather than dictates to it. I am proud of all these efforts, even though there is so much more that needs to be done.

To Mayor Lori Lightfoot and former Mayor Rahm Emanuel: thank you for the faith you showed in my abilities.

To all the great women and men in blue who continue to serve: keep the faith and idealism that drew you to public service; the police profession is getting more demanding, but if you stick to the values that brought you this far, all will be well.

To all of our elected officials: as you implement the reforms to the CPD in the days ahead, please keep in mind the impact these essential efforts will have on the young officers out there patrolling in our communities and give them the resources and support they need to do things the right way.

To Charlie Beck and all the leaders in the CPD, good luck in all you do in the future; and if there is anything large or small that I can do to assist you in the future, please let me know.

And finally, and most importantly, to the people of Chicago: you have treated me with respect and decency during these past few years, even when we had disagreements about particular issues. I always felt like I was getting a fair shake and that most folks were willing to listen and engage rather than yell and argue. I pray that I have been able to reciprocate the support you provided me.

My plans for the weeks ahead will be to re-connect with my family, enjoy the holiday season, and improve my health. But I will always be a proud Chicagoan and I love this city with all my heart, so in the future I look forward to staying active and helping out in any way can.

God bless you all.

Eddie Johnson
Chicago, Illinois
December 3, 2019